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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2337  
INFO RUEHSB/AMEMBASSY HARARE 0005  
RUEHKG/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA 0007

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABU DHABI 000354

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR NEA/ARP, AF/S (WALCH), AF/EPS (ZIKRY) AND EEB/ESC  
(BROOKS-RUBIN)

E.O. 12958: DECL: (#####)

TAGS: ETRD PREL ECON EFIN ASEC ZI AE  
SUBJECT: UAEG OUTLINES EFFORTS TO COMBAT ILLICIT ZIMBABWEAN DIAMOND  
TRADE

REFS: A) 3/14/09 BROOKS-RUBIN/COOPER EMAIL  
B) STATE 18545  
C) 08 ABU DHABI 1463  
D) 08 STATE 126054

¶11. (U) This cable contains an action request -- please see para 4.

¶12. (C) On April 6, EconOff discussed Ref A, B and D points on illicit trade in Zimbabwean diamonds with Ali Fayel, Ministry of Economy Director of Origin, and Maryam Al Hashemi, Director of the UAE Diamond Control Office. Fayel and Al Hashemi outlined UAE policies and practices to control trade in conflict diamonds from Zimbabwe and elsewhere. They told EconOff that the Ministry of Economy is currently reviewing the UAE Rough Diamond Trade law (#13/2004) to respond to concerns raised in the UAE's 2008 Kimberley Process (KP) Review. In particular, the UAEG plans to strengthen the enforcement mechanism to ensure that violators are prosecuted. Currently, customs officials seize suspect or illicit shipments, but smugglers usually face immediate deportation rather than prosecution. Al Hashemi noted that Dubai Customs detained a Zimbabwean woman in fall 2008 who attempted to smuggle a large quantity of rough diamonds from Ethiopia. Dubai Customs seized the diamonds and deported the woman.

¶13. (C) Al Hashemi said she conducted training for customs officials in Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Sharjah, Fujairah and Ras Al Khaimah in 2007 and 2008 on the Kimberley Process and rough diamond identification.

(Note: Each UAE emirate has a separate customs authority. End Note.)

In addition to verifying the KP certificates and invoices that accompany diamond imports, Al Hashemi said the Diamond Control Office used to confirm each shipment with the exporting country. However, African countries routinely failed to respond to UAE requests for confirmation of KP certificates from African countries, including Zimbabwe. Al Hashemi said that the UAE continues to reconcile quarterly and annual trade data with all diamond exporters, per KP standard practice. She added the UAE finds it difficult to distinguish between Zimbabwean diamonds and other African diamonds. EconOff suggested utilization of Ref B's Marange production footprint guide.

¶14. (C) Fayel said the UAEG was deeply concerned by Ref B and D suggestion that UAE nationals are trading in illicit Zimbabwean diamonds. Al Hashemi noted that the diamond industry in the UAE, which consists of approximately 60 active firms, is almost exclusively handled by expatriates. Al Fayel said the UAEG had no indication that UAE nationals are involved and asked that the USG provide specific information to support this allegation, so that the UAEG could respond appropriately. ACTION REQUEST: Post asks that the Department provide any available details related to UAE national involvement.

OLSON